

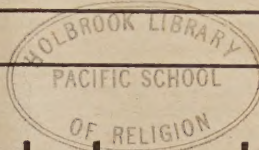
# Social Questions Bulletin

Volume 40

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Number 7

*The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial membership organization, seeks to deepen within the Church the sense of social obligation and opportunity to study, from the Christian point of view, social problems and their solutions; and to promote social action in the spirit of Jesus. The Federation rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society and seeks to replace it with social-economic planning to develop a society without special class or group discriminations and privileges.*



## A Friendly Reply to Our Critics—Methodist and Otherwise

### THE FEDERATION'S METHODISM

"The Federation was organized in 1907. Across the years, it has counted in membership some of our most distinguished Methodists and loyal Americans, and has made notable contributions in the field of social justice."—Unanimous statement, Bishops of the Methodist Church, April 20, 1950.

"The Methodist Federation for Social Action has pioneered. . . . has a history of achievement of which the Church is proud."—General Conference of the Methodist Church, 1944.

Last April the Bishops erroneously stated: "We are reliably informed that the Executive Committee of the Federation has recommended to the Federation's membership that the word Methodist be dropped from its title." The Bishops added: "We commend this action. It would in our opinion clarify in the public mind the independent nature of the Federation."

On July 18 the Executive Committee first considered and recommended a change of name. The membership is voting on the recommendation.

The 1948 General Conference overwhelmingly killed proposals to press the Federation to change its name.

The Scripps-Howard press chain early in 1948 and a *Readers' Digest* article early in 1950 brought pressure for a name change.

The Methodist Federation was named in 1907. It did not take on the name of any existing Church. The Methodist Church was named in 1939 when three denominations dropped from their former titles words which had never been in The Methodist Federation's title (Episcopal, Episcopal South, Protestant). They chose the simple title "The Methodist," popularized for 32 years by The Methodist Federation!

There is no legal or moral monopoly on *Methodist*.

Have the Bishops considered the Methodist Rural Fellowship—another fine unofficial group? Or hospitals, camps, and conference grounds which have *Methodist* in their titles but violate the Methodist Social Creed by racial discrimination? Or the "Methodist Laymen's Group of Kansas City" which vainly memorialized the General Conference to get Methodist out of the Federation's title? Or "The Methodist Challenge"—a publication widely circulated across the Church which vilified a beloved Bishop? Why single out for recommended name change the Methodist Federation for Social Action when the General Conference refused to do this? Because a secular magazine article also thus singled out the Federation?

### CORRECTION INVITED

In April the Bishops expressed disagreement with certain unspecified and undated "positions taken and statements published of late in the Federation's official *Bulletin*." The *Bulletin's* editor could say the same since different viewpoints have been published.

We will welcome a statement for publication from the Bishops identifying, dating, and refuting the statements with which they disagree. Our commitment to accuracy is unequivocal. We will always correct inaccuracies.

Despite subsequent misinterpretations, the Bishops' April statement did not attack the Federation.

### THE PRESS AND THE SOUTHEASTERN BISHOPS

In August the Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction issued a statement based, they confessed, not on "an official report of the actions of the Federation at its recent meeting," but on what had been *falsely* "reported in the press."

If they had known what their fellow-Methodist *did* at Wilber-

force, they could not have issued their statement. We would welcome from them and publish another statement based not on misleading press reports, but on *actual* Federation stands. Were statements at Wilberforce not factual, or stands taken unChristian or undemocratic? Nothing of value is gained by name-calling, but there is great value in objective and Christian discussion and analysis.

The Federation took *no* position on Korea, despite contrary press reports. In discussion on Korea, members differed freely—as expected in truly democratic gathering. The Secretary expressed his view that "Korea's future should be determined not by Korea's neighbors, the U.S.S.R. and China, nor by the U.S.A. and its allies, but rather by the Koreans themselves—peacefully if possible. To help demonstrate belief in the worth and rights of the Korean people we can repeal the Oriental Exclusion Laws which deny Koreans American citizenship. Another step would be Fair Employment Practices Legislation by which Korean-Americans would be protected from discrimination." The Secretary stated certain facts about Korea, the first being that (despite North Korean and other reports) the North Korean Army had invaded South Korea. He will supply the whole statement to interested members and welcome any factual corrections.

The press reported the Federation asked pardon for eleven Communist leaders. They were not mentioned at Wilberforce. In the interest of civil liberties the Smith Act was opposed as follows:

"The right of any individual to speak his mind as to what is right or wrong is democracy's best safeguard. We therefore call for the repeal of the Smith Act as being unconstitutional, and designed to suppress any unpopular political philosophies. We appeal for Presidential amnesty for all convicted under the Smith Act."

First convicted under that act are *anti*-Communists whose freedom the Communists oppose. The Federation's action was not for one specific group, but against an undemocratic act and for *all* its victims. A similar position is taken by numerous non-Communist and anti-Communist organizations.

### WHY MISREPRESENTATION AND SMEAR?

The General Conference and *all* Bishops (Southeastern included) describe the Federation as an organization which for 43 years has "pioneered" and "made notable contributions" for "social justice."

Precisely. And this is why the Federation and its officials (and the more conservative Federal Council, various Methodist Bishops, etc., etc.) are, and have been in the past, misrepresented and smeared.

To have "pioneered" for "social justice" is to have sought and helped bring needed social changes even when opposed by powerful groups with influence on newspaper chains and magazines.

To raise basic questions about the social order or the foreign policy which serves it;—to challenge Americans to defend and apply their own revolutionary and democratic traditions (equality of all men, "brotherhood from sea to shining sea," "liberty and justice for all," "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" for all men of all creeds, conditions, races, nationalities and colors; freedom of expression, dissent, assembly, association and petition for the redress of grievances—for *all* men of *all* minorities and political persuasions); to seek an economy in which men and cooperation are more important than dollars and competi-



tion, in which none can profit from war and all can profit by peace; to work for rational and democratic planning in which depressions are ended and technologically potential abundance is made real; to work for peace and life when men war and destroy and profit: to serve a God of love and faith when hate and fear are taught and demanded everywhere; to follow a Christ who knows no East or West in days when Churchmen as well as other patriots are pressured to sanction cold war; to love the men, women and children on both sides of the battle lines, including those we are expected to hate and fear; to refuse to hunt or burn witches or to play the self-saving game of those who do; to believe in the power of divine Love to call and redeem the least and most despised of men; to prefer persecution to persecuting if forced to make such a choice; to hear the cry of the oppressed rather than play the game of the oppressor; to follow Amos rather than Amaziah, Jesus rather than the Pharisees, Paul rather than Saul; to accept with Jesus new wine and new wineskins when so many say the old is better; to be loyal to the facts wherever the facts may lead, and to make known facts which are needed and suppressed; to be with Paul "not conformed to this world but transformed by renewing of mind"—and thus to defy the lie which identifies traitorhood with dissent; to defend rights of those with whom you disagree; to serve a Christ in whom there is no Jew or Greek, and to seek a Church in which there is no black or white; to ask a wealthy Church Board to remember the Church's Social Creed when they deal with the workers they employ;—to do such things (at any time and especially in days like these) is to incur the certain risk of misrepresentation and the calculated risk of smear, by those who fear social change and hope to silence and frighten its advocates or at least to prevent unprejudiced consideration of the proposals advocated.

### OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS INVITED

We heartily concur in this final plea made by the Southeastern Bishops in August: "Freedom of speech is one of the guarantees of a democratic country, but we earnestly urge our people to let the statements and acts of the Federation and its officials stand or fall on their own merits." This is all we want or have wanted. Our friends and fellow-Methodists must first discover what those "statements and acts" really are (information we gladly supply). They cannot just trust what "is reported in the press," since the press is sometimes hostile and misleading.

We will go on publishing facts largely suppressed and yet needed "in the field of social justice." And if we ever inadvertently are mistaken in factual statement, we solicit and will publish correction. We welcome and solicit objective, Christian discussion and analysis of any and all of our statements and acts.

### ANALYSIS VERSUS SMEAR

There is a vast gulf between analysis (however critical) and smear. The traditional way to smear is to link those smeared with the poison word of the day. Today that emotion-arousing and thought-stopping poison word is communism. Once it was anarchy or socialism. In the Middle Ages it was heresy. In early Church days it was Christianity.

When a *Readers' Digest* article says a group of Methodists "give aid and comfort to the Communists" the ex-Methodist author is appealing to prejudice as opposed to dispassionate, objective and Christian analysis or refutation. Similar words ("aid to the Communist propaganda and program") were used recently by some of our fellow-Methodists concerning Federation stands as reported in the press, but which actually never had been taken.

### PINK FRINGE OR PINK TEA GROUP

That grand layman, Harry Denman, of our Methodist Board of Evangelism, wrote: "When Jesus lived the Pharisees said He was a sinner and the prince of devils lived in him. They called Jesus names. When someone does not agree with you, the easiest thing is to label that one by names. . . . Today, if Jesus were living, he would be labeled 'pink.' . . . He believed in Samaritans and was called one. Today Jesus would believe that communists should have salvation, and so would be called a communist. . . . He ate with Levi and his friends and was indicted for doing so by leaders of the conservative, status quo groups. Personally, I am not worried about the pink fringe in the Methodist Church. I know they believe in the living Christ and want to live as He lived. I am worried about The Methodist Church becoming a pink tea group and not a mighty force in the world to champion the rights of minorities, and reach the masses for Christ. The Methodist Church, if it listens to the pink tea group, will become impotent. . . . Some say Americans are scared.

Some say the editors are frightened. Why should we be afraid? We have a living Christ."

### CHRISTIAN TRUTH WITH CUTTING EDGE

The great Bishop who again leads our Federation said in a recent sermon: "Had Jesus taken advice to live a normal life, keep out of trouble and avoid raising bothersome issues, we would never have heard of him. . . . In his day Jerusalem was richest bank and strongest citadel in the Middle East. He entered it against the militarism and financial interests of his time. Jesus had the Mosaic Law and the prophets, but he narrowed them where they could mean something. He gave the widest truth the sharpest edge. It brought him to Calvary, but Calvary released new strength. Today Christian Truth . . . needs more narrowing down to the realities, and cutting edge. It needs more Calvaries."

### CHRISTIANITY DISTURBS THE COMPLACENT

Bishop Gerald Kennedy urges the Federation not to "retreat, apologize, or play safe" in the face of current criticism: "For a vast number the church is successful if it has no criticism, enough money to pay bills and a sweet meaningless message for people not bad anyway, and represents to established interests something never questioned. . . . Christianity will never adjust itself to the status quo. There will always be something to upset the comfortable. If you can sit beside social evils and be concerned with nothing but inner spirit, you can be a Buddhist, not a Christian." The Bishop thanked Mr. High and Flynn: "For the first time in a long while, they indicate maybe the church is vital, and some people are a little frightened." He urged Methodist to leave their critics on the defensive, turn to constructive actions, and avoid "spending nine-tenths of the time declaring we aren't Communists. . . . For the past 60 years, the epithet 'Communist' has been hurled by those favoring the status quo, against any movement that would change the economic system."

### THE FEDERATION AND COMMUNISM CHARGES

So the Federation and its officials are not likely to get too frightened or defensive or surprised if the pink or red label is thrown our way. In such days of hysteria and name-calling, that's expected. Of course, that doesn't make the names accurate, or the charges true. Indeed they are both silly and false. Neither the Federation, nor any of its officials, is Communist or ever has been.

Those who make Federation policies are religious men and women who trust in the Living God. Called by His prophets, captivated by His Son, they would pay the price of discovering and doing His just and loving Will. For Federation members and leaders, God—the Father of all men—is no illusion; and true religion is no opiate, but a powerful force for personal and social transformation. Have Federationists, in acting on these Christian convictions, aided "the Communist propaganda and program?"

Some name-calling critics label us as pro-Communist precisely because we will not accept with them or Communists curbs on free dissent or civil liberties. We affirm in our MFSA Constitution that we seek peaceful "social changes by democratic decision, not by violence." We have never taught that we serve democracy by resorting—even temporarily—to dictatorship. We have loved and sought to save our American democracy, and to prevent violence by keeping open the door to peaceful progress through peaceful advocacy and dissent. Incidentally, in America today the actual curbs on our cherished freedoms (and on peaceful advocacy and dissent) are imposed by anti-Communists who whip up anti-Communist hysteria, not to maintain, but to obliterate the distinguishing virtues of our cherished Anglo-Saxon justice and western-style democracy with their emphasis on individual liberties. Thus in fighting Communism they would have us imitate the very intolerance, authoritarianism, and disrespect for individual liberty which we all recognize and reject in the Soviet system. When the Federation defends American democracy from current blows, is it in this way promoting the cause of Communism?

The Federation and its leaders support the official Methodist Church stand for peace and negotiation between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. but we never regarded either nation as Utopia, above criticism. This *Bulletin* has contained many criticisms of Communist or Soviet practices, which we will document on request. Is it by thus recognizing the bad, and good, in all societies that we aid the propaganda of communism?

### FEDERATION'S DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES

The Bishops rightly described the Federation as independent. It is also non-partisan and thoroughly democratic. Its policies are



## Referendum on the Name of the Federation

The Executive Committee, July 18, voted 10-8 to recommend to the voting membership a change to *Methodists Federated for Social Action*.

The membership meeting, July 19, rejected this recommendation 29-17.

As our Constitution provides, all voting members are requested to vote on the ballot below, before November 30. Only paid-up members can vote. Please send your dues.

At the request of the Wilberforce meeting, two statements for and against this recommendation are presented herewith.

### FOR CHANGING

"Accuracy, conciliation, and strategy suggest the desirability of adopting the name '*Methodists Federated for Social Action*'. The present name requires explanation and implicit apology. The new name would require no explanatory parenthesis ('Unofficial'). It accurately indicates that the Federation is a voluntary association of individuals who speak only for themselves. The new name will heal the resentment some sincere people feel at the seeming use of the name of the Church. Some of these people can be won to a better understanding of the Federation if we meet them half way. It will deprive the incurably hostile of a false front behind which to continue their attack: change of the name will require that they base their opposition on issues.

Finally, strategy argues for the change. The General Conference of 1952 will probably authorize the establishment of an official body of some sort in the field of Social Action. A place will remain for a bona fide free association of individuals who can do what the official body will not attempt. The more nearly the name of the Federation describes it as being what it is, the stronger bid it can make for continued support by liberals across the church."

### AGAINST CHANGING

"It would deny the MFSA heritage to change the name of this great fellowship at this particular period in its history. The Methodist Federation for Social Action carried that name long before the name, The Methodist Church, became a reality. It was only after unification that the word 'unofficial' was necessary by way of explanation. Regardless of what name we choose or by what we are known, if the great prophetic message of the Christian Gospel is maintained, a certain amount of antagonism and opposition will be focused toward us.

We are Methodist people. We are a federation, a spiritual fellowship, attempting to the best of our ability to express the teachings of Jesus in Christlike social action. Let us not allow inuendos from un-Christ-like people to intimidate a single member of the fellowship. It is my sincere hope that members of the fellowship across the Church will vote to continue this great Christian fellowship under the existing name, The Methodist Federation for Social Action."

Please fill out and mail to national office of MFSA, 150 Fifth Ave., New York 11, before November 30 (and with back dues if in arrears).

My vote on the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the name of *The Methodist Federation for Social Action* be changed to *Methodists Federated for Social Action* is:

FOR..... AGAINST.....

Signature: .....

## SOCIAL QUESTIONS BULLETIN

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## An Appeal for Peace—and Funds!

Mr. J. E. Berry, devoted Federationist, manufacturer, has written a pamphlet for wide support of the Federation. He sees its historic and prophetic obligation to sharpen the Church's conscience as of the greatest importance as mankind painfully struggles toward Peace and Brotherhood. All MFSA friends and members will be heartened by this interpretation of MFSA. Free copies available from MFSA or Mr. J. E. Berry, Columbus, Kansas.

## Mississippi Negro Saved—MFSA Helped

Execution of Willie McGee was stayed by U. S. Supreme Court Justice Harold Burton in order that "justice be served" by permitting the defendant's lawyers to request review of the case's latest phase by the full Supreme Court. The defendant charges prosecution witnesses perjured themselves in his second trial. The stay of execution was fruit of active efforts to that end by several organizations, including MFSA.

## The International Red Cross Appeal

The MFSA national membership meeting unanimously endorsed the International Red Cross appeal to the governments to outlaw "atomic weapons and all non-directed weapons."

As early as September, 1945, the Red Cross urged this. Its 1950 meeting declared the situation more serious than ever and adopted the following:

"Belligerents during the Second World War respected the Convention against poison gases or bacterial weapons.

"The use of undirected weapons—that is, which cannot be directed with precision or which will destroy large areas indiscriminately thereby annihilating human beings whose protection is the mission of the Red Cross—endangers future civilization.

"The International Red Cross calls upon the Powers to absolutely ban the use of such arms and of atomic energy or similar force for military purposes.

"Against the atom bomb no protection is possible within the radius affected. Use of such a weapon is less a development of new methods of combat than a new concept of war. This was demonstrated first in mass bombardments, then in bombings from the air. Formerly in war, certain regulations were presupposed, making for a distinction between combatants and non-combatants. Now no such distinction is possible. How can such weapons spare hospitals, prisoner-of-war camps, or civilians? Their use leads to extermination, purely and simply. They cause suffering out of all proportion to strategic necessities. Many victims perish of burns after weeks of agony; others are afflicted for life with terrible disabilities. Both the immediate and the long term effects are such that there is no possibility of giving help to the victims.

"The atomic bomb nullifies any effort to protect non-combatants by Conventions, and destroys the basis of the Red Cross mission.

"The International Committee of the Red Cross emphasizes the fact that it takes no part in political or military matters. However, if its assistance, on the humanitarian level, can contribute toward the solution of this problem, the Committee is prepared to give its aid according to the principles of the Red Cross."

## ARE YOU A "SUNSHINE PATRIOT"?

These are trying times for MFSA, Church and Kingdom. The Federation is sending a CALL to all members now to

1. Pay up dues in full or send in a special contribution.
2. Send a *Bulletin* subscription to a friend or Church Group.
3. Bring in a new member to be counted with those creatively active in times of crisis.

It is financially impossible longer to maintain non-contributors on our mailing list.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE!**



by unbrotherly landlord coercion, but by the more convincing methods of discussion, persuasion, correction, refutation. We will gladly print the Board of Publication's reply to Brother Guerrero. If the facts are not as stated, we are eager to know and publish the corrections. We will publish also any Board refutation of criticism that, in closing its Chicago Printing Plant, it failed adequately to consult the workers or their interests.

During these thirty-one years, the Board brought no complaint or charge against the Federation as a tenant. The Board did not consult us in connection with the unilateral ouster move. To us, their fellow Methodists, they gave no warning, charges, hearing.

By an old American principle the accused must get charges and hearing before sentence. The Board of Publication has violated this fundamental principle, important for preservation of American democracy and genuinely Christian fellowship.

The Board apparently failed to consult State Laws which protect tenants from such arbitrary action by landlords.

We believe the members of the Board of Publication prefer discussion to edicts. We believe they respect the old American and Christian principle they neglected in this instance. We trust they will yet grant their fellow churchmen the treatment and hearing deserved.

Perhaps you, our readers and members, will send us and the Board of Publication your own views. Let us hope other Methodists examine the basic issues involved and pass judgment. We think Methodists, however conservative, still believe in the Golden Rule, in justice and fair play, and in freedom. Methodist Boards are expected to observe the demand for freedom unanimously and officially adopted for The Methodist Church by the last General Conference:

"A prophetic ministry can come only from a free pulpit. Recognizing the severe tensions today that often create an intolerant spirit and restrictive procedures be it resolved that we affirm our belief in the necessity of maintaining freedom for the Methodist pulpit. We deprecate the tendency to label our ministers as 'hopeless conservatives' on the one hand, or 'dangerous radicals' on the other hand, when they honestly proclaim their interpretation of the truth in a given situation. Our ministers must be kept free to call to judgment those who are guilty of either personal or social sin. We would, with emphasis, reaffirm this statement from the Episcopal address:

"We are determined that free preachers, occupying a free pulpit, preaching to free laymen in a free land shall proclaim the freeing truth of the religion of Jesus. Methodism is determined not to allow the intimidation of its clergy. We call upon our laymen, whose freedom is equally involved, to join our preachers in maintaining this freedom in the presence of social systems that deny it, so that our people may progress steadily and surely, and above all, peacefully toward a society worthy of the term, 'the kingdom of God.'"

The Methodist Federation for Social Action, oldest religious organization of its kind in the world, has weathered earlier attacks with fewer supporters than now. It will weather the present storm. But the problem is not simply the Federation's future. The future and character of Methodism, and the future and character of America, are at stake.

#### FREEDOM CAN BE LOST

No one has shown this more lucidly and vigorously than Dr. Harold A. Bosley, pastor of Evanston's First Church and recent Dean of Duke Divinity School. Dr. Bosley warns,

"Freedom is a dangerous thing in the sight of many people. They are frightened by the spectre of change, deep unpredictable change which it carries with it. Their fear forces them into . . . curtailment of freedom, in order, they say, to preserve it. It is hard to recall a time in our history when we have had a worse attack of jitters on this matter of freedom. . . .

"Precious as is this right of freedom of religion . . . we in the United States can lose it. . . .

"Within the last few months a determined effort has been and is being made not only to silence the leaders of The Methodist Church who belong to the Methodist Federation for Social Action but also to get annual conferences to pass resolutions which denounce this particular organization and, further, to identify our church with our form of society. I have read several such resolutions and confess that I am appalled by their meaning. The Caesars asked no more of the early Christians than some of these resolutions ask of our church. They ask us to forswear the right of fundamental criticism of our social order, to preach the Gospel within the limitations imposed by that social order, but not to challenge those limitations. A

Church that will accept such an ultimatum, even when delivered by friends, is not worthy of the name Christian Church. We need not worry unduly about freedom for such a Church; it will not need freedom; it will not want freedom; it will soon lose all sense of freedom—it will surely die."

#### A BOUQUET TO OUR MEMBERS

We are grateful for the support which has come from the great majority of our members, despite the pressures to which they have been subject and the misrepresentations which inevitably have accompanied present hysteria. We know some Federation members pay a real price for their Federation loyalty and convictions. We believe it would be better for God's Kingdom in these fateful days if Church membership itself were not so cheap or respectable, and if Church membership in itself represented a powerful challenge to all who would profit from war or by subversion of our cherished democracy.

Some who whip up the great hysteria in America today do not really fear imminent capture of this country by the small and unpopular Communist minority. They do fear dissent, free and independent thinking, and prophetic religion and action—for all of which the Methodist Federation for Social Action has stood for 43 significant years, and will stand in the challenging years to come. Such dissent, such independent and prophetic thinking and action, such contributions "in the field of social justice"—are the *raison d'être* of the Methodist Federation for Social Action. They were never more needed than today. If you agree, if you want to be a part of this fellowship, if you want to defend it and help keep it alive and vital—correspond with us about program suggestions, help us build and vitalize local and conference chapters. We urge you also to send *today* word of your own attitude, accompanied by your own dues, a gift subscription, or a special contribution.

Tom Paine had a message for days like these:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country. But he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. . . . I call not upon a few, but upon all: up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wheel . . . so great an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future world that, in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and repulse it."

Write us today, and tell us where *you* stand.

JACK R. MCMICHAEL.

#### Chapter Activities

**CHICAGO**—Undertook to raise \$100 in the present emergency. Adopted a positive program for cooperation with local church committees on peace and social education and action; the cooperative movement; support for United Nations Week, World Order Sunday, the National Citizens Committee of the Woman's Division. Planning a monthly newsletter. Took important action urging veto of loan to Franco Spain, opposed political representation to the Vatican and Mundt-Ferguson legislation; urged representation of minor parties on ballot.

**COLORADO**—Annual meeting heard Bishop Phillips on the high objectives of the MFSA; and Dr. Ralph Sockman on the social application of the Christian faith. New officers elected. Secy-treas. Rev. Wasser says, regarding the hostile action of the Board of Publication: "I believe it will do us good. Every red-blooded member will be seeing to it that his lapsed membership is brought up to date, and every virile Methodist with a social vision will join in a flood of memberships to the Federation. Oppressive measures have never hurt a noble cause. They shall not now."

**MINNESOTA**—Set up an aggressive program for MFSA advance. Besides circularizing members for badly needed dues payments, it is promoting a goal for 150 active members, newsletter, conference summer work camp, and United Nations travel seminar.

**NEW YORK**—Pledged \$500 toward national fund drive. A leading member wonders at the Southeastern bishops reaction to Federation stand on the Smith Act: "How can men in responsible positions be so grossly ignorant of what is happening to American civil liberties, and so callously indifferent about it?"

**OREGON**—Moving steadily toward payment of its \$800 share of the national deficit under Mark Chamberlin's dedicated leadership. Participating in a campaign with religious and civil groups in Portland to abolish discrimination in public places on account of race, color and religion.



formulated not by a few officials near the office, but by the nationwide membership meeting—and the democratically elected, nationwide Executive Committee. Does such thorough and consistent democratic practice “aid the Communist propaganda and program?”

### MFSA'S NON-PARTISANSHIP

Federation members alone make Federation policies; political parties or outside groups have never been consulted. The MFSA Constitution states clearly: “Membership does not commit anyone to support any political party, or any special theory.”

There are two ways of following a party or government line. One is always to agree with the particular party or government, on the basis of an a priori and unscientific judgment that the particular party or government will always be right. The second is always to disagree with that particular party or government on the basis of an a priori and unscientific judgment that that party or government must always be wrong. Neither view permits objective evaluation of new situations; neither is scientific. The Federation and its officials reject both.

Our independent views have sometimes agreed with, and sometimes disagreed with, views of other groups—including the Communists. The unfair propaganda that we and Communists always agree cannot stand factual analysis. When we champion civil liberties for all minorities, e.g., Trotskyites, we take a position with which Communists and many anti-Communists strongly differ. When we West Coast Federationists opposed war-time Japanese evacuation, the Communists (and Associated Farmers, etc.) advocated it. We Southern Federationists opposed a separate Negro state, a plan advocated (for different reasons and with different content) by Communists and others. In early 1945 the Federation accepted its new Secretary's proposal for a strong stand against post-war conscription, a proposal then strongly urged by Communists. The Federation and its Secretary took strong post-war action for the Stratton Displaced Persons Act; the Communists (and some strange bedfellows) opposed it. Communist governments have claimed that South Korea attacked North Korea; the Federation's Secretary publicly stated at Wilberforce that the reverse was true (one of his statements about Korea which the press ignored.) When the Soviet Army invaded Finland the Federation urged embargo on the USSR. When Communist governments withheld support from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which the U.S.A. supported, the Federation and its Secretary praised our government's stand and strongly supported the Declaration. When the Soviet and allied governments have boycotted U.N. agencies, the Federation has urged full participation in these agencies by all member governments. Are such independent stands “aid to the Communist propaganda and program?”

Much is charged these days with “aid to the Communist propaganda and program.” In Hollywood this charge bans the movie “Hiawatha,” since Hiawatha worked for peace among red Indian tribes!

The Bishops unanimously agree MFSA for 43 years has worked notably and effectively for social justice, within the framework of American democracy. Is it thus that Communism is promoted?

The Federation consistently works against depression and for full, useful employment. Is this promotion of Communism?

The Federation has worked consistently for peace and against world war. At the Methodist General Conference Mr. Dulles said that Communism grew immensely in the first two World Wars, and might triumph everywhere if World War III comes. Are we then who fervently work for peace and against global war, working for Communism?

After the High article, MFSA was attacked by the *Alabama Advocate*. The Editor confessed we were not advocates of Communism; but asked us, as it were, to come out from hiding and reveal our stand on segregation. Now it was impossible for us to come out of hiding—we never were there. Of course, the Federation opposes racial discrimination and segregation, and always worked for brotherhood and equality. Do Americans thus promote the propaganda and program of Communism?

One of America's greatest assets in the world today is the American tradition of civil and individual liberty. We who defend that liberty are defending America itself and its chance for moral leadership in the world. Is it in this way that we give “aid to the Communist propaganda and program?”

If our critics still affirm that Communists are comforted when religious men and women seriously apply the social teachings of Jesus and the prophets, courageously working for democracy, brotherhood, justice and peace—we respond that our major commitment as followers of Jesus is not to discomfort Communists,

but to serve all our fellows, and to discover and obey the will of the loving, Eternal God.

### DO CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN AND FEAR UNTOUCHABLES?

But what of the related charge, from another quarter, that “some leaders of the Methodist Federation for Social Action . . . have thrown their support to . . . groups which welcome the participation of Communists?” This charge is poorly and unfairly stated—to arouse prejudice rather than thought. The truth in this charge is that Federation Secretaries and Presidents and other leaders have at times in the past—for some specific, worthy cause—cooperated as individuals with organizations which did not practice political discrimination and which were open without screening or exclusion to all who would work for the particular causes involved. One organization, to which all Federation leaders have belonged, and which has never practiced political discrimination, is The Methodist Church.

The Charter of the United Nations is based on the belief that peoples of different political persuasion can and must work and live together in one world. Every U.N. delegate supports an organization “which welcomes the participation of Communists.”

As to “guilt by association” Bishop McConnell says: “Now let me pay my respects to guilt by association. It is an old weapon—used by the scribes and pharisees against One accused of associating with ‘publicans and sinners.’ The Council of Bishops recently stated that the Methodist Federation for Social Action ‘was organized in 1907. Across the years, it has counted in its membership some of our most distinguished Methodists and loyal Americans, and has made notable contributions in the field of social justice.’ During these 43 years, the Federation never accepted the ‘guilt by association’ principle, or used it as a weapon against any Federation members or leaders. Had it done so, it never would have made these recognized ‘contributions in the field of social justice.’ If it does so today, it will have, in my judgment, no more reason to exist.”

### EVICITION BY THE BOARD OF PUBLICATION

In September the Board of Publication voted in Dallas to oust the Federation from “space at 150 Fifth Avenue,” rented since 1919. The Board gave only two reasons: (1) The Bishops stated in April that the Federation had never claimed to be an official church agency; (2) The Bishops commended to the Federation a name change and disagreed with unspecified statements in the *Bulletin*.

The Bishops can speak for themselves. If they had wanted MFSA ousted, they would have said so as did the magazine article they were answering. They did not; and nothing in their April statement at all justifies it. Bishop Oxnam's reply to the Readers Digest, which the Digest refused to publish, specifically defended the Federation's right to its office space.

In pointing to the Federation's unofficial status, the Bishops were not attacking it, but stating a simple fact the Federation itself made clear for 43 years, including the 31 the Federation has rented its present office. The well informed Board of Publication did not suddenly discover this old fact in September or April 1950. And the Board knows there are other tenants in the same building who are not authorized Methodist agencies and have no connection with Methodism.

But the Board's last reason for ouster, is far more ominous. Is any Methodist publication (including the more conservative official ones) required to exclude all statements with which Bishops might disagree? Consider the numerous other (official) Methodist publications edited by Methodists occupying office space under control of our Board of Publication? Are they all now to get the strong hint that they cannot be free or independent, or print any statements with which Bishops or the Board might disagree? Is this trend Protestant or Methodist? Can Methodism forget that it is a free Church—one which has always championed free and independent thought?

The Board of Publication is supposed to operate under, not over, the General Conference. The 1948 General Conference overwhelmingly defeated memorials for ouster of the Federation. The Board stand contradicts and violates the General Conference action.

How long a democratic America if landlords representing this historically democratic Church set for secular landlords an example of throwing out tenants with whose real or alleged ideas or publications the landlords disagree?

The Christian Century reminded its readers that this *Bulletin* has sometimes criticized labor policies of the Board of Publication, which runs a profitable, \$13,500,000 a year business. (See, for example, the recent *Bulletin* article: “Methodist Printing Plant Closed” by Rev. Armand Guerrero.)

If the Board resents this article, we urge them to respond not



# American Democracy at the Crossroads

The omnibus MUNDT-MCCARRAN-KILGORE BILL (Internal Security Act of 1950) passed over the President's veto, constitutes a non-stop, cross country express route to the establishment of the police state in the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

## CONDITIONS OF THE BILL \*

1. It includes Mundt-Nixon type of legislation which forbids a newly defined type of sedition and requires registration of certain Communist and Communist Front organizations and registration of the members of such organizations, with penalties of different sorts falling upon those who do register and those who do not.
2. Provisions from the McCarran immigration and naturalization bill providing for exclusion and deportation of members of organizations adjudicated to be Communist and restricting the rights of naturalized citizens to join any such organizations.
3. Provisions formerly found in the Kilgore Bill, providing for internment of those as to whom, "there is reasonable ground to believe" that they will probably engage in espionage or sabotage, in times of war, crisis, invasion or insurrection.

## OPPOSITION TO THE BILL

This Act of a rushed, hysterical Congress has met with unprecedented opposition from the Church, the Press, education and cultural organizations, industry, and even the National Judiciary and the National Executive.

## ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General J. Howard McGrath, speaking to a joint annual meeting of the American and Canadian Bar Associations, said, "We appear to be going through a period of public hysteria in which many varieties of self-appointed policemen and alleged guardians of Americanism would have us fight subversion by prescribing an orthodoxy of opinion and stigmatizing as disloyal all who disagree or oppose them."

## THE PRESS

*New York Times* declares: "It is hard to believe that any thoughtful member of Congress who loves freedom, liberty and democracy as much as he hates Communism could support this bill once he has a clear understanding of its contents. . . ." "In its broad prohibitions, its sweeping registration requirements, its narrow-minded immigration and naturalization clauses, the new law represents a long step away from the American tradition of liberty and freedom."

*World-Telegram-Sun* maintains that Congress did not read the Veto carefully enough and declares, "When Congress reassembles again in November it should give the veto message the thoughtful attention just denied it in the adjournment rush."

*St. Louis Post Dispatch* continues, "The depressed peoples of Asia and Europe look hopefully to America to demonstrate the purpose and scope and strength of the democratic ideal. Instead, we stage an exhibition that is thoughtless, frightened, partisan, mean, vindictive and shameful."

*Toledo Blade* says, "When legislation is aimed at what men think and say and not at what they do, isn't Congress really striking at the fundamentals of American freedom?"

*Chicago Blade* declares, "The statute would permit the imprisonment of an individual upon somebody's judgment that he might commit a crime. That is contrary to all of our principles of civil liberties. It should not become a law."

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSITION

Seventeen National organizations led off the opposition by declaring, "This bill is a violation of traditional American guarantees of individual freedom" and they sent their united appeal to the President to veto the bill. Some of the organizations were: *American Association of University Professors, American Civil Liberties Union, Americans for Democratic Action, American Council on Human Rights, National Council of Jewish Women, American Veterans Committee, Council for Social Action, Congregational Churches, American Jewish Congress, Friends Committee on National Legislation, International Association of Machinists.*

## PRESIDENT'S VETO MESSAGE

The President, in his veto message of September 22, states that even the Security and Intelligence Agencies of the Government, the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Central Intelligence Agency, and the Department of State expressed their "hope that the Bill would not become law as it would seriously damage the security and intelligence operations for which they were responsible."

The President lists his own *Seven Objections*:

1. It would aid potential enemies by requiring the publication of a complete list of vital defense plants, laboratories and other installations.
2. It would require the Department of Justice and its Federal Bureau of Investigation to waste immense amounts of time and energy attempting to carry out its unworkable registration provisions.
3. It would deprive us of the great assistance of many aliens in intelligence matters.
4. It would antagonize friendly governments.
5. It would put the Government of the U. S. in the thought control business.
6. It would make it easier for subversive aliens to become naturalized.
7. It would give Government officials vast powers to harass all of our citizens in the exercise of their right of free speech.

The President continues in his Veto Message, "Fortunately we already have on our books strong laws which give us most of the protection we need from the real dangers of treason, espionage, sabotage and actions looking to the overthrow of our Government by force and violence."

Some of these are: *Espionage Act, Peacetime Sedition Act, Subversive Organizations Registration Act, Foreign Agents Registration Act, Immigration Act of 1918, Nationality Act of 1940.*

He continues, "The language of the bill is so broad and vague that it might well result in penalizing the legitimate activities of . . . loyal citizens. I believe we have better protection under existing law than we would have with the amendments and additions made by Internal Security Act of 1950, H.R. 9490. . . ."

"There is no more fundamental axiom of American freedom than the familiar statement 'In a free country we punish men for the crimes they commit, but never for the opinions they have.' The reason this is so fundamental to freedom is not as many suppose that it *protects the few unorthodox* from suppression by the majority. To permit freedom of expression is primarily for the benefit of the *majority* because it protects criticism and criticism leads to progress."

The President continues: "Our position in the vanguard of freedom rests largely on our demonstration that the free expression of opinion coupled with government by popular consent, leads to national strength and human advancement. Let us not, in cowering and foolish fear, throw away the ideals which are the fundamental basis of free society."

The United Nations is meeting on our shores at this time. Freedom of information and expression is one of the big issues before it. Zacharias Chafee, Professor in Harvard University Law School, states, "This bill will do us great harm among our natural friends in the United Nations. They know well how much suppression is made possible by the vague definitions in this bill. We just can't defend such a sedition law against the bitter attacks of our opponents and still less against the distrust of our friends. Our professions of love for open discussion will ring hollow in their ears. And matters will be much worse when enforcement starts with numerous inquisitions by the Subversive Activities Control Board, mail opened, non-registrants prosecuted, lists gone through with a fine-toothed comb, and all the rest of it. Frenchmen, Belgians, Dutchmen, Norwegians, Danes have had years of experience with that sort of thing under totalitarian occupations and it leaves a stench in their nostrils."

## WHAT CAN WE DO NOW THAT THE BILL HAS BEEN PASSED?

Congressmen, Senators are at home now. Congressional campaigns are now taking place. We ask you and all churchmen to rescue our imperilled democracy. *We urge you to secure promises from all congressional candidates to vote for the repeal of this un-needed and dangerous legislation as soon as Congress re-convenes and that you cast your votes accordingly.*

"Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands everywhere. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."—*Abraham Lincoln.*

\* For detailed presentation and discussion of the Internal Security Act of 1950, write to American Civil Liberties Union, 170 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C. The A.C.L.U. has offered legal help in test cases of individuals or organizations accused under this Act.